

Listen

## LIT 110 Intro to Lit syllabus—Fall 2015

Prof: Steve Lockwood

Office: Cowan Hall 302B

Phone: 265-3700 x3190; 800-265-3700 x3190

E-mail: use D2L mail tool

Mailing address: P.O. Box 7751, Havre, MT 59501-7751

### Catalog course description

LIT110 Introduction to Literature

3 semester credits

Study of three of the major literary forms (fiction, poetry, and drama), including examples of each from several periods.

Selections will include works by and about minorities and women. [from the MSUN

2014-2015 catalog (online),

<http://catalog.msun.edu/course-descriptions/lit/>.]

Literature 110 introduces students to the literary use of language (as distinct from its practical use of conveying information and from its hortatory use of persuading) and to the worlds of fiction created by such use in three major categories: poetry, drama, and prose. Students will learn to identify such literary devices as simile, metaphor, and allusion, and will learn to recognize when, and to explain how, literature can suggest more than it says while simultaneously offering clues that help direct a reader's understanding of what it says. To these ends students read, write, and discuss selections written by critically acclaimed authors.

**This is a blended course with both online and face-to-face students.** Be aware that it is not a watered-down version of the classroom course. In fact, it's more demanding! It requires determined self-discipline to keep up with the work, and initiative to ask for help when you need it. Please read "[How to succeed in this class](#)" for specific tips.

### Course goals

Students who complete the course will learn the basics about literature's influence in these areas:

- English language
- culture
- the world of ideas

The standard set of learning outcomes for this course in the Montana University System is listed here: <http://mus.edu/Qtools/CCN/outcomes/LIT.pdf>

### Disability services

At MSU-Northern, students with physical or learning disabilities are provided with a variety of services such as alternative testing, as directed by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In order to access these services, students must provide documentation of their disability and meet with Ligia Arango (406-265-4133) to register for Disability Services.

All students who qualify for the program are encouraged also to enroll with Student Support Services in Cowan Hall 211.

If you have further questions, please call Ligia Arango at 406-265-4133 or Becky Nicholson at 406-265-4134. See the [Disability Services webpage](#) for more information.

### Course work

In addition to reading, students will write a short (2-page maximum, single-spaced) analytical paper each week, and complete twelve quizzes, a midterm exam, and a final exam, as well as participate in **online** discussions week by week about what you read.

Regular participation (three posts per week) in these online discussions is required. (See **Posts**, below, for posting rules.) Our weeks run from Monday through Sunday at midnight, Mountain Time. Contrary to popular myth, you will find that analyzing literature invariably increases your appreciation of it; so, please log in regularly and participate in class discussions.

## **Reading**

Students will read numerous poems, three plays, and a dozen or so short stories. All assignments are listed by week on D2L under the Content link. Please read the selections before the week they're due. I'll announce via e-mail any other specific pieces you are responsible for. Students will also read short weekly commentaries (see the links on the course's D2L homepage), each other's discussion posts, and perhaps some reviews online.

## **Writing**

You'll have two specific areas of writing assignments: weekly posts and papers.

### **Posts:**

Each week you'll respond to at least two posted discussion questions, and then to one of your classmate's posts. These asynchronous discussions reinforce, or substitute for, face-to-face dialogue in an on-site classroom. Through them you'll gradually build a sense of community with one another, and by sharing your insights, provide learning experiences for all of us. To make our interactions as useful and enjoyable as possible, please follow the [Rules for Posts](#).

### **Papers:**

You will write weekly analyses of the literature you read (2-page maximum, single-spaced). Paper assignments appear under the Content link on the D2L Homepage. See Course Procedures: Assignment Preparation, below, for format & submission tips. When you include references in your paper, you'll use in-text citations and a Works Cited list in [MLA](#) format. **You must cite ALL ideas that are not your own.** Review [plagiarism](#) under Course Procedures below. See Assignment Preparation below for

format. **Note that research for these assignments is NOT required.** The bit about MLA format provides guidance, just in case.

## Quizzes

Via the Quizzes link on the Homepage, you'll take twelve quizzes, a midterm, and a final. These are usually open book but timed (generally 60 minutes). Once you begin, the timer starts; you can't finish later, and you have only one chance to complete the exam. Make sure you've read the material and highlighted passages or taken notes **before** starting an exam. Failing to prepare is a sure recipe for a low score. Most quizzes use multiple-choice or matching format; short-answer questions require a paragraph or so, along with references by page & line number (for poetry) to your textbook. By student preference, **all** exams are scheduled for weekends. They're available from 5:00 a.m. Saturday till 11:55 p.m. Sunday, so you can choose when to start.

**NOTE: YOU MUST USE THE RESPONDUS BROWSER IN ORDER TO TAKE THE QUIZZES** (you can use it for all D2L browsing if you like). Take the Practice Quiz, and follow directions there for downloading the Respondus browser to your computer.

## Course text

Johnson, Greg, and Thomas Arp. *Perrine's Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense*. 12e. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage, 2015.

## Course policies

### Grades:

Grades are expressed in points on a scale of 100. Your final grade results from your point total in five areas: papers, discussion posts, quizzes, midterm exam, and final exam. Each of these areas carries the following percentage weight of your final grade: papers, 30%; discussion posts, 30%; quizzes, 25%; midterm exam, 6%; final exam, 9%.

**Note:** you can negatively affect your course grade by missing assignment/quiz deadlines and/or by routinely delaying posts till late in the week (after Wednesday). Your overall grade should update each week in D2L.

Quizzes, as noted, measure your grasp of specific actions or details. Paper grades measure both your understanding of the literature we read, and your ability to explain that understanding to others. Exam scores indicate your grasp of literary terminology and your understanding of the readings. My grading system employs a point scale which weights assignments more heavily as we go through the semester, on the assumption that your understanding of literature—and your writing about it—will improve weekly. The grade for your discussion posts measures completeness (that is, details in your posts). Remember that participation in posts requires at least three posts per week: see the [Rules for Posts!](#)

Grades express your performance relative to the standards for literature courses at MSU-Northern, which in turn derive from those at other colleges across the United States. If you believe your grade should be changed, assemble the evidence that forms the basis for your belief and make an appointment to discuss your grade with me. In light of the evidence that we present, I will determine any adjustment—up or down—of your grade.

Letter grades and their numeric equivalents follow. The ranges include plus and minus.

100-91 = A

90-81 = B

80-70 = C

69-60 = D

59-0 = F

As a check of D2L you may wish to calculate your grade according to the percentages given above, and I encourage you to do so. Be sure you calculate accurately: round your answer only at the end.

Because you must sometimes round your answers, it is tempting to think that you can round during the calculation process. Don't!

Never round a number unless it is the final answer that you are reporting. Rounding during the calculation process may lead to serious errors. Your calculator or computer is capable of working with many digits. Keep them all while you are still working toward a final result. —Donald R. Latorre et al. *Calculus Concepts: An Informal Approach to the Mathematics of Change*. Brief 3rd edition. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2005, page 61.

For example suppose your paper scores for papers 1-5 are 91, 89, 85, 95, and 88. Your average is 89.6, NOT 90. Imagine that you also have identical scores for your first 5 quizzes. If you rounded to 90 for both paper and quiz averages, you'd have a total of 180. Since you really have only 179.2, your rounding error has inflated your grade by a point. Keep **all** the decimals for **all** your averages until you've completed **all** the calculations for your grade!

### Course procedures:

1. **Office Hours**.—Please use these office hours to call as frequently as you like; if they are impossible for you, we'll try to arrange a mutually convenient time. If you are confused or want suggestions on your papers, ask me.

MW 11 a.m. - noon

T noon - 1 p.m.

Unless otherwise directed by me, use the D2L e-mail **only**, not Yahoo, Hotmail, or any other e-mail. I'll try to respond to you within 48 hours (except over holidays, like Thanksgiving).

2. **Attendance**.—I expect regular participation in online discussions. Don't wait till week's end to post your responses to my topics; the later in the week you post, the lower your grade. Please be aware that sporadic participation will adversely affect your grade.

3. **Timeliness and Late Work.**—Please submit your work on schedule. The class rule is no late **anything**. Under extraordinary circumstances, I accept late papers if and only if (1) you're ill or have a family emergency and (2) you've notified me by e-mailing a message on D2L IN ADVANCE. Missed quizzes or discussion postings result in zeros—baaad for your overall grade.
4. **Plagiarism.**—Plagiarism is stealing. It results when a student tries to claim credit for another person's ideas or written work. This is a serious offense; our class has **zero** tolerance for it. You will fail the course, and may be suspended or dismissed from the University. So please, no plagiarizing. **If you have ANY doubt about what constitutes plagiarism,** work through all ten examples—five each for word-for-word and incorrect paraphrases—at Indiana University (<https://www.indiana.edu/~istd/examples.html>). Also familiarize yourself with the various other forms of academic misconduct, which you will avoid. See pages 141-43 in the *2014-2015 MSUN Student Handbook & Planner* or the web reference <http://www.msun.edu/admin/policies/600/601-2.aspx>.
5. **Assignment Preparation.**—All your essays and notes must be word-processed. Leave approximately 1.0" margins on all sides of your typed papers. Use a footer to repeat your name and number the pages at the bottom (MyName: 1 of 3, &c). Type your name, class number, and due date in the upper left-hand corner of page one; center your title on the page, triple space, and begin your text. (See below for an example.) **Use single-spaced block paragraphs.** Place all pages in order and staple them together in the upper left-hand corner. Please avoid plastic covers and cover pages. If you're an online ONLY student, see below.

Use this format for the upper left-hand corner, first page:

Your Name  
Paper #2; Lit 110—Lockwood  
13 September 2015

**Ultra-important:** online-only students must save each document in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format and submit it to our online course Dropbox. See the course Homepage for this link.

Don't understand the .rtf format? For example in Microsoft's *Word* program, go to File->Save As and in the dropdown box at the bottom, change from a Microsoft *Word* (.doc or .docx) selection to Rich Text Format (.rtf), give the file a name, and click Save. Here's an [illustration](#). Other word processors work nearly the same way.

You may wish to review the D2L tutorial, available from D2L's login page.

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